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"Even less different from overt criminals are those latest criminals, high in office, whom society venerates as its chiefs."

Cesare Lombroso

BUSINESS AS USUAL AT NUMBER 11!

Only a month ago on his own admission Kenneth Clarke knew nothing about economics. Now he is Chancellor and his political backers in the Tory Party assure us that the new broom at Number 11 will clean up the estimated £50,000 million deficit in the public sector, though hardly anything is being said about the ever-increasing balance of trade deficit.

Lamont has gone, but what about the advisers with whom ministers surround themselves and the army of permanent civil servants who run the show year in year out? No resignations there, so far. So why expect lawyer Kenneth Clarke, who knew nothing of the economists' jargon only a month ago, to tell *them* how to run the economy. Mark you, in a sense it's the blind leading the blind. For though the Treasury proposes, it's the City, the banks, the pension funds, the speculators and the multinationals who dispose.

So what powers (subject to approval from the Mafia above) has *any* government in a capitalist society to balance the books? Taxation and/or cuts in public services. The Tories, who after all have been in office for the past fourteen years, have drastically reduced taxes for the stinking-rich and the well-off minority as well as eroding valuable public services (health, education, pensions); they have squandered income from oil and gas (which was not available before 1979); and both for dogmatic as well as purely financial reasons (to save the sinking capitalist ship) have been selling off what MacMillan (when mellowed in old age) called "the family silver" – the nationalised industries. Those billions of pounds have also gone down the drain, and they continue to sell off the community's

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ACCIDENTAL PRAISE FOR AN ANARCHIST

The architect Giancarlo De Carlo came to London on 15th June to receive a thoroughly established honour, the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture, awarded by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

In a period when the most celebrated British architects, like Sir Norman Foster, or the most praised American ones, like Philip Johnson, are admired for the sheer number of world capitals in which they are hired to build prestige office blocks for multinational finance houses, banks and insurance companies, it was a delight to hear the RIBA president, Richard MacCormac, declare that De Carlo's work was "a testimony to community: he does not build monuments, he builds communities".

He was talking about De Carlo's forty years of work in the rehabilitation of an Italian hill town, Urbino, full of ancient, crumbling buildings, but which gave employment beyond the tourist trade for its inhabitants in the modern world.

Perhaps the best endorsement of this comes in a chance comment from a long-term *Freedom* reader, the designer Harry Ward from Macclesfield. He went on a tour of Italian towns, including Urbino, and told us that "the interesting thing is that De Carlo's work is not really visible, though if you compare it with other Italian cities you begin to realise the differences. It is encouraging that RIBA should have selected a real and self-effacing architect like this when all the hacks are publicising the spectacular."

It isn't altogether an accident. A few years ago, De Carlo described how in the Resistance period of the Second World War he came into contact with Delfino Insolera and Carlo Doglio, and as a result attended the anarchist congress at Carrara in September 1945. "I came to have a deep relationship with the group who published the journal *Volantà*,* and through them, the whole galaxy of Italian anarchism: exceptional people who have been the most important encounters of my life."

And in his address at the RIBA accepting the award, De Carlo listed the writers who, he said, had shaped his view of the world. "They were Kropotkin, Godwin, Morris, Bakunin and Malatesta, Thoreau and Whitman, and of course Patrick Geddes." He criticised the architectural profession for what he described as "the habit of taking the side of the powerful and leaving the weak to their fate".

For an account of the anarchist current in architecture and housing, see the 'Anarchist Alternatives in Housing and Architecture' on page 5.

* At that time edited by Marie Louise Berneri's mother Giovanna Berneri and her companion Cesare Zaccaria.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR ATTACKERS

Shortly after the Freedom Press Bookshop opened on Saturday 27th March, the building was invaded by five young men wearing balaclava helmets and carrying long wooden truncheons, one of them with a spike. They smashed up everything smashable: the typesetting computer, the photocopier, the telephones. They knocked over the bookshelves. No one was hurt. Before leaving the attackers sprayed 'C18' in large letters over the wall above the bookshop door. They left behind on the ground floor a bottle of petrol.

On 7th May we were broken into and the newly-installed photocopier and the laser printer and other smaller items were taken.

On the evening of 4th June an attempt was made to set fire to 84b, presumably by breaking a window in the Aldgate Press ground floor print-shop and introducing some petrol and setting light to it. Considerable damage was done to a large printing machine and the guillotine was a write-off as well as stocks of paper and printed jobs. Though the toilet on the first floor was badly damaged, neither the Freedom Press office nor the Bookshop were damaged.

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BUSINESS AS USUAL AT NUMBER 11!

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remaining assets. Soon there will only be the contents of museums and art galleries to flog. But nothing they can do will halt the march to bankruptcy.

Ten years ago when the Thatcher government was in the midst of another recession and massive unemployment, Freedom Press published a volume of writings with the provocative title *Why Work? Arguments for the Leisure Society.** The editor's preface included this comment:

"What no Western government is able to tackle (assuming it intended to) is a planned economy based on production for needs and at the same time a redistribution of wealth. What no Western government has the courage to say is that the average living standards for the affluent quarter of the world's population are already much too high if the living standards of the other three-quarters of the world's inhabitants are ever to be raised to levels which ensure that they enjoy just the basic comforts of life."

How right we were! For the Thatcherite solution to that recession was to launch a massive financial spree: everybody could borrow the money to become a house owner. We were all going to be little capitalists; we were going to be the shareholders when the nationalised public services were privatised; we were to be the consumerists *par excellence* – on tick of course. Chancellor Lawson was blamed when the capitalist dream turned into a nightmare: bad debts and bankruptcies galore; house repossessions by the banks and building societies in tens of thousands; unemployment back to three million (even when the government have massaged the figures).

Lawson went, Major became Chancellor and nothing changed – how could it? Then the Tory mafia stabbed Thatcher in the back and put Major in her place and Lamont at Number 11. Nothing changed except for the worse. Lamont became the scapegoat for the capitalist system's bankruptcy.

The politicians, Tory-Lib-Lab, all *believe* in the capitalist system. They only argue with each other as to how it can best be operated for the benefit of their niche in the community. Nobody can deny that all the Tory Budgets have benefited the rich and the well-off, at the expense of those who can least afford cuts.

To a question put by Alan Milburn, a Labour MP for Darlington, the Treasury has admitted that £10,000 million was given away in top rate tax cuts since 1988, most of it to the South East. Over the three years, an average of 500,000 people gained £3,364 a year, making each of them £10,000 better off. As the MP put it succinctly, "The whole country is now paying the price for the Conservatives tax bonanza for the wealthy".

Agreed, but what is the Labour Party's alternative? By some magic they will stimulate the economy. So more production will result in more jobs, more spending, more profits, more tax revenue and the £50 billion in the red will be paid off. Have they not yet realised that the world markets are flooded with unsold *everything*: cars, cameras, computers, furniture, paints, tools? Add to these all the advertising leaflets and brochures offering a hundred and more gadgets and time-savers, all on twelve months credit interest free, to realise that there is no solution to the capitalist crisis: of *supply* more than exceeding *demand*. And so far the rich industrial powers are concerned, the (relatively) new factor which will ensure a permanent recession, unless there is a complete abandonment of the market economy, is the *industrial* growth in the Far East *and excluding Japan*. The growth in exports of eight Far Eastern countries including China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan, has risen from $136,000 million in 1980 to $468,000 million in 1991. Compare this with the United Kingdom's $110,000 million in 1980, which was not far short of the combined exports of the Far Eastern eight countries, with the $185,000 million in 1991, which is only slightly more than *a third* of their combined exports. And, in our opinion, this is only the beginning for there is no reason why the multinationals will not transfer always more of their industrial production to those countries where cheap and skilled labour is still available. In due course that too will come to an end.

In this writer's opinion, the choices open to the workers of the world (for it will literally be an *industrial* world) are competition, leading to World War Three, or co-operation and autarchy through a social revolution.

For those of us who are on the way out, we can only die protesting. For the young it will be a grim future if they don't seek to influence the world they live in. We have all the technology, the know-how, to live in a world where we can enjoy work as our contribution, not to a boss's profits but to the commonweal, and leisure galore to, as the Hippies in the '60s were saying, 'to make love not war'. But apathy, 'I'm alright Jack' attitudes will consolidate all that is negative. Anarchism is the call to the positive!

*** *Why Work?***
210 pages, third printing, £4.50
(post-free inland, overseas add 15%)
ISBN 0 900384 25 5

OPEN LETTER TO OUR ATTACKERS

(continued from page 1)

The authors of the first attack left their 'C18' signature on the bookshop wall for all to see. The break-in was obviously for material gain. The C18 terrorists were out to destroy. The 'break-ins' were out to rob. They took saleable equipment and made clear their intentions by the fact that in the office they tipped out all the drawers, obviously looking for cash, littering the floor with the contents.

The third attackers who obviously intended to set fire to 84b and all its contents have not come forward to claim responsibility for their action. Are they not proud of having tried to reduce 'anarchy' to ashes? Surely they would have many allies? But perhaps having seen the response to the C18 attack they may have thought it not good propaganda to claim responsibility for this latest outrage, and just content to think that they would put us 'out of business'.

No question about it, the arson attack has been very serious. Apart from the fire damage to the printing machines (possibly £35,000) and paper stocks and the premises (another £15,000), at the time of writing the fire authority has limited the use of the building. So now the bookshop is, for the time being, closed as well as the Freedom Press office.

Both this issue of *Freedom* and the 12th June issue have been held up on the printing side for all these reasons. If, however, our attackers fondly imagine that they can silence us they underestimated our determination to carry on.

Long before they were even thought of, in World War Two, the Freedom Press Bookshop and our archives in Red Lion Passage in Holborn were destroyed in May 1941 by German Nazi firebombs – and we survived. In 1944(?) our printing office, Express Printers, at 84a was badly damaged as a result of a German V2 bomb – yet we survived. A few years later a fire (not by arsonists) did considerable damage and we survived. So we will survive this time as well, and in the knowledge that so many of our readers are with us.

But this report / open letter is an invitation to you the arsonists who, so far, have not claimed responsibility for the recent attack on Freedom Press to come forward and explain why we are one of your targets. We will publish in *Freedom* whatever statement you are prepared to produce in justification of your attack. Obviously we will reserve the right to reply.

While we can understand people such as the 43 Group (see page 5) advocating the banning of the fascists in the 1940s, just as the ethnic minorities are doing likewise now presumably towards those to whom this open letter is addressed, anarchists have always defended the right of minorities to express their opinions however disgusting for the obvious reason that we anarchists are also expressing minority views. How can we demand the right to express our ideas if we at the same time join a chorus to deny it to other minorities? Obviously if other minorities – and C18 and the British National Party are minorities – resort to violence not against the establishment but against minorities such as anarchists, they must be warned that if they continue with their violence they must expect retaliation.

We are now offering 'whoever it may concern' to have their say in *Freedom*. We loathe their ideas but we also defend their right to express them – and we are inviting them to express them in *Freedom* and explain why they are trying to prevent us from making our propaganda.

News and Views

With greed essential to the proper functioning of our capitalist society, there are none so greedy as those who have found a way to use their money twice; once in the stock market and once at Lloyds of London. This insurance institution, designed to make the rich richer, has successfully been doing so for many years but recently it has been getting its sums wrong, the result of a number of environmental disasters and particularly for not appreciating that asbestos could be lethal. Its members who are called Names (no kidding) need to have assets of only £250,000, which they still keep, but in return for untold profits have to accept unlimited liability for insurance losses. Now with expected losses of £2.6 billion for 1990, the latest figure available, many of these seriously rich people are in deep trouble. Among them are dozens of Tory Members of Parliament, several government ministers and a number of judges, and they face bankruptcy if they cannot pay up, just like any small business man or woman hit by the downturn in the economic cycle – or do they?

The establishment protects its own and these pillars of our ruling elite must not be allowed to suffer too much, especially as a bankrupt cannot remain a Member of Parliament. The thought of what even a dozen by-elections might do to the government's slender majority does not bear thinking about. If there are any Labour MPs also in trouble they are keeping a very low profile, but one high profile Labour supporter, Robert Maxwell, was heavily involved and his non-existent estate must now owe even more millions.

The solution gaining ground is elegant in its simplicity. The Names must pay up of course, but will have unlimited time to do so, unlike the householder unable to meet water, electricity or mortgage bills. As the chair of Lloyds Hardship Fund, Mary Archer, has said, "Lloyds does not pursue members into bankruptcy provided they admit their liabilities and agree to pay what they can afford". Lloyds has described these arrangements as "designed to protect members' homes and to preserve a level of income sufficient to meet the reasonable domestic needs of their families". Bet it's more than they would get on Social Security.

A prediction that electronic tagging of the elderly (*Freedom*, 3rd May) is on its way has soon been fulfilled. From Halifax comes news that Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council Social Services Committee has

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WILDCAT
We'd like to reduce the number of people claiming Unemployment Benefit.
So here's a leaflet about how to apply for Disability Benefit instead.
Certainly. Anything to oblige.
DISABILITY BENEFITS

AN ANARCHIST NOTEBOOK

When Thatcher came to power in 1979, she said "You can't solve problems by throwing money at them", then tried an experiment to test if her statement was true. She threw money at the police in at attempt to solve the problem that the police are not much good at deterring crime. The attempt failed, so it seems the experiment was a success.

Or perhaps crime was too widely defined. Ken Clarke told the Tory conference last October "We shall crack down on armed robbery, we shall crack down on rape, we shall crack down on squatting". Thatcher apparently thought trade unionism was a crime, and used the police to crack down on that.

Or maybe the judges withdrew co-operation. Police are certainly complaining that sentences are too short, and worse than that, the Appeal Court keeps releasing convicted murderers on the ground that the convictions were secured by fakery.

Anyway, the crime rate has gone up, despite all the extra resources and big salaries. A possible reason is that law-abiding citizens no longer trust the police like they may have done before the miners' strike and the Birmingham Six exposure. So now the police have a campaign of advertisements, and speeches by Chief Constables, inviting us all to trust them again. The attitude of police and public, they say, should be one of co-operation not conflict.

If this sentiment is genuine, it is new. A couple of years ago the police favoured conflict, as we see from the case of Louisa Rostant who was sacked from the Metropolitan Police in 1991. She is taking the Met to an industrial tribunal claiming unfair dismissal on the grounds of racial discrimination and victimisation.

The Met's defence is that she was sacked for not doing her job properly. As evidence they cite an internal report on her performance: "Her attitude to the police service seems to be one of non-conflict with the public".

In his first radio interview as Minister of the Environment, John Selwyn Gummer stated that VAT on domestic gas and electricity will reduce consumption, and so protect the ozone layer. In answer to the howls of derision, the DoE press office pointed out that Mr Gummer has only been at environment for a few days – too short a time to learn that global warming and depletion of the ozone layer are different.

The press release went on to say that the minister has been "discreetly briefed". Part of the press took this to mean he had been told a few simple facts about what he is minister of. I think it more likely, however, that the briefing consisted of the advice never to improvise but always to stick to the script he is given.

His ignorance is impressive. Governments used to tell us nuclear energy was cheap; but they had to change their tune when electricity was privatised. The money-men knew that the story about nuclear electricity being cheap was a lie, and refused to underwrite privatisation unless nuclear was taken out of the deal. It is now subsidised by a tax on electricity from other sources. But Mr Gummer said in February 1993: "The Energy Review cannot change the facts about the low cost of electricity produced by nuclear power stations".

Let those of us who are self-educated take comfort that a posh university 'education' does not necessarily mean you learn anything. And let pig-ignorant politicians take comfort that pig-ignorance is no bar to being a cabinet minister.

The anarchist ideal, *anarchy*, is a society in which nobody can be forced to do anything, or prevented from doing anything, by means of coercion or intimidation; whether the threats are explicit or tacit, whether they are real or fictitious, whether they are threats of violence, loss or punishment after death.

Anarchy is the theoretical end-point at which anarchism aims. But anarchism is not to be confused with the hypothesis that anarchy is attainable in practice. Of course anarchists find the idea of a coercion-free society agreeable. But anarchism is not a religion; it does not confuse what is agreeable with what is certain.

An argument has been advanced (by George Walford) that a society without coercion is a self-contradiction. Suppose, for the sake of argument, there were a society without bosses or coercive individuals. Such a society would need a mechanism to dissuade individuals from acting coercively, for instance a general disapproval of such behaviour. Then individuals who contemplated acting coercively would be dissuaded by the threat of general disapproval, which is to say individual coercion would be prevented by communal coercion.

I am not sure if the argument is fair. Suppose it is, I guess most anarchists today would say okay, if a society without bosses is the nearest we can get to anarchy, let's attain that. And if a society without bosses came into existence, I guess the anarchists of that society would be enthusiastically resisting social coercion.

It's exhilarating to think that the anarchist movement will never be out of a job.

DR

Occupation of Bailey Bridge

On the evening of 22nd May 1993, over 250 protesters at Winchester occupied a bailey bridge which Tarmac Construction wished to place over the A33 by-pass to facilitate movement of heavy machinery from 'Tarmac Village' (on Shawford Down below Oliver's Battery) to the cutting at the Hockley end of Twyford Down.

Following an afternoon of group workshops, a general meeting was held to decide tactics. It was scarcely necessary – although hundreds of extra security guards and police had been drafted in, they appeared to be expecting a 'rave' rather than a concerted attack on the site. As it was, a half-dozen of us were able easily to pull the two tiers of razor wire away from the fence around the site, and the chain-link fence was soon down on top of the wire and people rushing over it to storm the bridge.

At least 250 protesters were soon in occupation of the bridge, singing and banging on it in rhythm. This was at a quarter to eight in the evening. Another hundred or so protesters had been kept out of the compound by the arrival of a police contingent. It was nearly midnight before the police and Group 4 Securitarse guards moved in to remove those on the bridge. The protest remained non-violent, but as our intention was to occupy the bridge until 8.00am (when Tarmac had to re-open the A33), rather than being a publicity stunt, many people refused to leave the site when asked.

The police began making arrests – in all 52 people were arrested. With fewer than 100 of us left on the bridge, they then began threatening to remove us by force unless we left 'voluntarily' – many protesters did in fact leave at this point, making things more difficult for those of us who remained. The police introduced the idea that the protesters in the top of the bridge represented a 'hard core' who were not non-violent (a complete untruth) and after removing those of us in the middle a small contingent of police in riot helmets were sent in to remove the few remaining protesters, some of whom had locked or chained themselves to the steel structure.

The majority of protesters were not arrested and, with three exceptions – who were held until Monday morning – all were given unconditional bail. The only charge brought against all the others was that of 'obstruction'. Most protesters stayed until after 3am, watching the snail-like progress of the bridge as it was pushed by a bulldozer across the road cutting.

All in all it was a successful and energising action. With the exception of one protester, who was run over by a tractor in full view of six police officers (the driver is being prosecuted for hit-and-run) and is still in hospital, no one was hurt. The behaviour of the police was remarkably restrained, even friendly – possibly due to the large numbers of 'ordinary people' and press present, and even Group 4 refrained from using violence. Media coverage, although repeating the Assistant Chief Constable's suggestion that the protest was "getting out of hand" (a total lie fabricated to justify his decision to use riot gear), was excellent and actually made the national news.

Katy Andrews

Compulsory carrier bags

If, like many environmentally-minded citizens, you are in the habit of declining the ubiquitous carrier bags handed out by shops for even the smallest purchase, be warned: it might be as well to attend a course on self-defence before you do it again.

On Monday 10th May a female worker from the independent radical bookshop 'News From Nowhere' walked into Dodo's, a clothing shop in Liverpool, with a friend looking for a pair of trousers. Finding a pair she liked, she asked a security guard where the changing rooms were and got the facetious reply that normal practice was for female customers to change in front of him while he removed his glasses. Ignoring this she located the changing rooms and after trying on the trousers decided to buy them.

At the checkout she paid, and was given the trousers in a carrier bag. Upon removing the bag as unnecessary she was told that she had to have it to show that she'd paid for the goods. Believing that this was the function of her receipt, she insisted that she did not want the bag and gave it back to the cashier. As she tried to leave the shop, however, she was stopped by the security guard. She again attempted to leave but again he physically restrained her and in the ensuing scuffle hit her in the face. Her woman friend, who tried to intervene, was grabbed by the throat and pushed around as the security guard called them "lesbians".

At this point another customer intervened and identified herself as a police officer, saying that she had seen what had happened and would take down the details. She warned the security guard that if the two women decided to prosecute for assault she would give evidence. The manageress of the shop, who was working at one of the tills and witnessed the fracas, refused to intervene.

The two women are now consulting a solicitor about a civil prosecution – over this distinctly uncivil affair. Meanwhile, it would seem that until Dodo's and its staff acquire some manners and apologise, a concerted boycott at the very least is in order.

If this is to be the future direction of the 'free market' then presumably we are also free – in the interests of a free society of course – to give aggressive security guards and other neanderthals a swift kick in the balls when attacked?

KM

Further information from: News From Nowhere, 112 Bold Street, Liverpool.

News and Views

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approved in principle a pilot scheme on 26th May, after a woman wandered away from a council home for the elderly and drowned in the river. "I accept", said the Social Services Director, "that the scheme is ethically dubious and associates people with objects, animals or criminals" (sic). The proposal involves fitting a £50 electronic tag to the wrist or ankle of the pensioner which would emit a homing signal capable of being picked up a quarter of a mile away.

Although full council approval is not needed, the democratic principle has not been entirely abandoned as we are informed that the proposal is "subject to prior consultation with staff, residents, relatives or their supporters and subject to a detailed report coming back to the committee giving full details of the scheme, the financial implications and the results of the consultations, for final approval by members". So, what is happening in your area?

Have you taken a look at your local police station lately? It might give you cause to contemplate one aspect of the decline in the quality of our lives in recent years. In my case, and I doubt it is untypical, the friendly blue light outside the building sandwiched between a butchers and a greengrocers in the High Street has gone and the building is closed. No longer can you expect to see elderly ladies popping in to report the loss of their bus pass or to say that their dog is missing and would the policeman on his rounds keep a look out.

A few hundred yards away in a side road a massive fort-like building has been built. It is the new police station. Surrounded by a high metal fence, and inside a space filled with flowering shrubs that would fool no one, then a wall, then another space, all scanned by closed circuit television – it is not inviting. Visitors have to walk fifty yards up a ramp to reach the entrance. Penetration by car would involve knowing the security code that operates a large metal door. No drawbridge or moat it's true, but the whole set up could not look more intimidating and you don't feel that they would be interested in a lost dog or bus pass.

HS

New FREEDOM PRESS titles

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ALSO TO BE PUBLISHED DURING 1993
The first volume of the Freedom Centenary Series covering the years 1886 to 1932, and a volume on the life and work of Emma Goldman. Details to be announced.

— NEWS FROM NICARAGUA —

Human rights go to the wall in Nicaragua

Last Sunday, 23rd May 1993, at 2am, four huge explosions that killed three people shook Nicaragua. Not an unusual noise or event for this war-torn country, but still somewhat out of place in a mechanics workshop in a poor barrio in the north east of the capital city Managua. The cause of the explosion was the accidental (?) detonation of part of a huge arms cache hidden beneath the workshop. The existence of the cache has been linked to the FPL (one of the five groups that make up the FMLN of El Salvador).

The startling upshot from this whole incident has derived from the fact that the workshop was owned by a Basque, Miguel Larios Moreno, a nationalised Nicaraguan.

Moreno has subsequently disappeared and probably fled the country, but by Tuesday the Nicaraguan police had arrested many foreigners including four Basques who have been Nicaraguan nationals for several years. One of the Basques was released under *habeas corpus*, one Swiss guy is still being held illegally, whilst three other Basques, Pedro Larriátegui (real name Javier Maria Larreátegui Cuadra), Jairo Fortes (real name Francisco Azpiazú Larrañaga) and Rafael Castellón (real name Sebastián Echandis Alcorza), were deported to Spain in a Spanish military jet on Sunday 30th May, only one week after the incident and only five days after their arrest.

They have not been charged – it's likely they have nothing to do with the explosion, they have no criminal record in Nicaragua. The speculation which seems more and more likely is that the whole incident is an elaborate arrangement on the part of the government of Spain to pressurise Nicaragua into extraditing people they suspect of connections with Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA).

The facts are that three Nicaraguan citizens, one with wife and child, have been arrested, refused the right of *habeas corpus*, not been charged, had their citizenship revoked and deported to face almost certain jail terms (even their lawyer was not informed of the deportation until hours after their departure). All aspects of the incident are completely illegal, being infractions of the migration and nationality laws.*

Extradition orders and loss of citizenship is a process that should take months to implement. So what are the special circumstances that gave members of the Nicaraguan government the right to take the law into their own hands over three nationals – innocent of the crime they were arrested in connection with – if it wasn't pressure from another state security force, in this case CESID the Spanish security service.

There are many people in Nicaragua who are political dissidents – does this mean that other governments are soon going to follow suit, e.g. Israel, Italy, Britain.

The Nicaraguan minister of government Alfredo Mendieta has stated that foreigners nationalised as Nicaraguans will not be protected by the law if they are "involved in this type of thing". He went on to say "we have to clean up our country". There is talk of a list of 47 other persons that they want to 'clean up', although the government has denied the existence of such a list. In reference to 'this type of thing', it is clear that association with anarchist organisations is categorised along with terrorist connections or sympathies, as was experienced in Peru in early May (see accompanying article 'Peruvian government jails anarchists').

The FSLN (opposition party of Nicaragua), various legal personnel and the human rights group CENIDH have strongly protested at the deportations, as has the international community here. A special commission has been set up by the National Assembly to investigate the case and its implications.

For more information write to 'Luz', Apartado 1922, Managua, Nicaragua, Central America.

* The Nicaraguan constitution also states that no national can be deported on political grounds.

Books reviewed in *Freedom* can be ordered from
Freedom Press Bookshop
84b Whitechapel High Street
London E1 7QX

— NEWS FROM CROATIA —

Stuff the war – long live anarchy!

Normally from Croatia we hear only frightening news – the headlines are full of rape, war and destruction. But here's a piece of good news for a change: a new anarchist group has started up in the Croatian capital Zagreb. Called ZAPO (from Zagreb Anarcho-Pacifist Organisation) it has about ten members, mainly young and male. Towards the end of 1992 it put out a 22-page magazine called *Comunitas*. As well as dispelling at length the myth that anarchism is chaos, the first issue of December 1992 also focused on pacifism, anti-fascism and anti-racism. There was a contradictory mix of militant and pacifist elements in both graphics and text: when asked what they actually meant by 'pacifism' ZAPO members explained that they weren't against all violence in principle (e.g. self-defence, class war, etc.) but were pacifist in the sense of being against the wars in ex-Yugoslavia today. But it's not as simple as that, they said, because to an extent the ordinary people in Croatia were in a defensive war against a ruthless invader, whatever they thought of the Croatian regime ...

The original source of inspiration for ZAPO was anarchist punk music from England and Germany, and the members have adopted a lot of the symbolism. While putting out the first issue of *Comunitas*, ZAPO made contact with the 'older' generation of anarchists who in the 1980s were involved in the Zagreb alternative group Svarun and later started the anarchist group Autonomija. Several of these people are not active in the Anti-War Campaign (ARK), whose well-equipped office ZAPO now has access to. After putting out issue number 2 of *Comunitas* (June 1993) ZAPO is planning a squatting action so as to get more room for its activities.

ZAPO is interested in making as many international contacts as possible. Write to them and maybe they'll be able to send you the latest issue of *Comunitas*. ZAPO's finances are not strong, because Croatia (and most of ex-Yugoslavia) has been 'third-worlded' – the average monthly wage has fallen over the last several years from a good US$300 to around US$75, while the cost of living has risen to near West European levels. Perhaps you could consider sending ZAPO a small donation. Here's their address: **ZAPO-ARK, Tkalčićeva 38, 41000 Zagreb**, tel: +3841-422495, fax: +3841-335230 or 271143. If you have a so-called Computer Mailbox you can contact ZAPO using the E-Mail code: ARK-ZG@ZAMIR-ZG.COMLINK.APC.ORG. Money donations for ZAPO can be wired to the postal bank account: 30101-620-16-2421726885 at Zagrebacka banka – add 'for ZAPO'.

Eastern European Working Group of FAU-IAA, Berlin

Culturing Anarchy

It may not be very original to state, but it is worth repeating, perhaps the best way to get anarchist ideas across without frightening people off who associate 'anarchy' with chaos, terror and destruction is to become *personally* involved in local, community based projects. These can be cultural or practical according to taste. However, there is a wide possible choice of either. For example:

Practical – Allotment Associations, Housing Co-operatives, Vegetarian and Wholefood Co-operatives, Voluntary Work, Local Exchange Trading Schemes (LETS).

Cultural – Alternative Bookshops, Poetry Groups, Music Sessions in Pubs (Jazz, Folk, Irish, etc.) and Walking Groups.

The advantage of such activities is that you make friends, contacts and get in touch with people at a local, personal level. You can show the validity of anarchist ideas in action, in a practical way without preaching, to people outside of the usual anarchist 'ghetto'. You may also come into contact with closet and lapsed anarchists as well as existing 'members' of the anarchist movement. Such activity at the local level is just as effective as attending 'demos', 'pickets' and street selling anarchist papers. People *are* more receptive to anarchist ideas when they see them in action. Try it!

JPS

— NEWS FROM PERU —

Peruvian government jails anarchists

The Peruvian government's crackdown on Sendero Luminoso has greatly increased military repression against all political opposition, including anarchists. On 9th May Peruvian anarchist Victor Hugo Navarro Huarmiyuri and the brother of a prisoner were arrested by Peru's national anti-terrorism directorate (DINCOTE) after visiting the prisoner, jailed anarchist Andres Villaverde Aguilar, in the maximum security Miguel Castro Castro prison. A third person in the group, Pablo Salazar Devereaux, a US citizen of Peruvian background and a member of the NYC-based anarchist group Love and Rage, managed to leave the prison without trouble and returned to the US two days later – the Peruvian government later issued an arrest order against him and searched the homes of his relatives in Lima. Prison guards strip-searched the other two as they were leaving the jail and found a letter from Villaverde as well as copied of articles from the *Love and Rage* newspaper. All mail is required to go through the prison mail system, which is closely watched by DINCOTE. The discovery of newspapers from New York prompted the Peruvian police to accuse those detained of having links to an 'international conspiracy' and probable ties to Sendero Luminoso, which in fact the anarchists reject as totalitarian.

***Love and Rage* update, 17th May 1993, posted on NY transfer**

News from Northern Ireland

The people of Portadown gave Michael Mates a frosty welcome when he came to visit eleven days after the bomb that devastated the town. I suppose they felt they have enough traders dealing in watches in the market square that used to be there before the IRA blew it to pieces. The credibility of government ministers has been taking a (welcome!) hammering of late with the Mates/Nadir affair and the revelations that Patrick Mayhew acted the heavy during the Supergun Scandal. The bombs that signalled the end of the local government elections have been greeted by the spectacle of our senior ministers 'fiddling while Ulster burns' (as Big Ian might say) – and nobody likes that. But will this anger at politicians generalise itself into support of anarchist thinking and action? Local anarchists hope so and will be holding a weekend conference in Cushendun on 18th to 20th June. Further details may be had from: *Organise*, c/o 7 Winetavern Street, Smithfield, Belfast BT1 1IJ. Use the same address to get copies of the latest bulletin from *Organise*, which had pieces on Tory economic policy, snippets from the 'free state' down south, something on the Spanish civil war and much more.

It's all change and yet all stay the same after the local government elections here. Limavady has a nationalist mayor for the first time ever, underlining the increasing evidence for an East/West split in the wee north's demographic make up. The UUP and the DUP have taken to falling out with one another leading to a row in Belfast City Hall and the UUP effectively taking the two top jobs. The Sinn Fein vote held up well, as did the DUP vote, and no great easing out of the 'extremists' happened, which pours cold water over the Secretary of State's assertion that the 'middle ground' was strengthening. The SDLP and Sinn Fein plan to continue talking at the highest level, which makes it extremely unlikely that the Talks about Talks will start again. In Derry the last sitting Unionist councillor on the west bank/cityside of the River Foyle lost his seat when another Unionist ran against him, highlighting again changing human geographies. Are we lining up for ethnic cleansing?

Big eco-story is that the local Du Pont plant is not to be prosecuted for spilling over a ton of toxic chemicals into the river last year. You can get fined for dropping litter on the streets but not for endangering the well-being of every fish, plant and animal in the area. It all, quite literally, stinks. And a strong delegation from Derry has gone to Belfast to try to get the board of the Housing Executive to reverse its decision to sack a hundred workers in its direct labour force. More direct action by the workers is planned. Also at board level, the local football club has changed personnel because the last board resigned due to excessive pressure from fans. Is this people power or what? Shame that the action on the pitch isn't as lively.

I would direct readers to the case of John Mathews from Derry who is currently being stitched up for a bombing in London on 24th April. He can be written to at HMP Belmarsh, Thamesmead, London SE28 0EB – his prison number is ENZ249Z. Give the Home Secretary and the DPP a rattle about it.

Dave Duggan

Anarchist Alternatives in Housing and Architecture

A friend sending me a newspaper feature about the transformation of a clapped-out North London housing estate through tenant power, remarked that "when anarchist ideas are successful they are always called something else". In the particular issue of housing I can see exactly what he means. For decades the political Right and Left have polarised attitudes to housing in a very crude duopoly. The Right, with its faith in the market, have sought to re-establish the private landlord by freeing him from government controls, and to encourage owner-occupation. The Left equated council landlordism with socialism, and ignored the mounting crisis of public housing in British cities.

I've discussed the various aspects of this crisis from an anarchist standpoint in a whole series of books over the years, both in justifying the squatters' movement, which has been concerned overwhelmingly with the occupation of publicly-owned but empty property, and in criticising the extraordinary fact that public policy in London since the war has destroyed more *fit* housing than it has provided. But there has for decades been a fatal crisis in the housing that councils, borrowing money from central government, *did* provide. Just because of the lack of consultation with tenants, the architectural technocrats embarked on vast, expensive projects which declined from the moment they were occupied. Management was paternalistic and bureaucratic, maintenance was both difficult and woefully neglected. Rent increases were imposed simply to balance council budgets. Everyone cheered at the sight of television films of demolition experts blowing up tower blocks, without reflecting that the same councils that paid the demolition contractors won't have finished paying back the loans that built the flats until some time in the next century. Other councils successfully turned them over to non-family occupants who, with the degree of service that the affluent take for granted, found them desirable residences.

The Labour housing ascendancy steadfastly ignored the graffiti on the wall, and the bureaucracy resisted demands for a charter of rights for tenants. Only its last Minister for Housing, Reg Freeson, had the slightest inkling that dweller control was a socialist aspiration (and he, as an alleged 'right-winger' was subsequently ousted from his Parliamentary seat to provide a safe place for an alleged 'left-winger', Ken Livingstone).

Meanwhile, a positive solution to the dilemmas of councils and their tenants had been offered, not from the socialist housing experts but in the anarchist press. The article 'Tenants Take Over: a new strategy for council tenants' in *Anarchy* for January 1968, actually won attention outside anarchist circles, and as its author I was continually asked to address meetings organised not only by the activists of tenant associations but by the hierarchy of housing management, and eventually to expand the argument into the book of the same name,[1] which in turn provided a slogan for tenant activists.

Meanwhile, another anarchist infiltrator, the architect John Turner, was drawing similar conclusions from the poor world. I borrow an account of his contribution from Peter Hall's book *Cities of Tomorrow*:

"In the army, he had read *Freedom* and had been converted to anarchism ... Turner went back to the Geddesian method which 'clearly enough, was to involve himself as closely as possible with all the people involved, especially those who were suffering most from the consequences of urban dysfunctions and blight'. But the possibilities for a young professional to do this 'in such a thoroughly institutionalised country as the United Kingdom seemed remote', and when he was given the chance to work in Peru with Eduardo Neira, he jumped at it. From the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s Turner worked in the Lima *barriadas*, which mushroomed from 100,000 to 400,000 people in the six years 1958-64. This was a time when the orthodox view was that such informal slum settlements were breeding grounds for every kind of crime, vice, disease, social and family disorganisation ... Turner was the first to find what multiple sociological and anthropological research was later to prove: that the truth was almost the reverse of what the conventional wisdom was saying. In fact, the invasions that produced the *barriadas* were highly organised, orderly and peaceful; they were followed by massive investments in housing; employment, wages, literacy and educational levels were all better there than average, let alone in comparison with city slums."[2]

This massive investment came, needless to say, not from the appalling Peruvian ruling class, nor from its posturing and sinister military class, nor from the drugs barons, nor the foreign investors, nor the Maoist 'Shining Path', but from the capacity of the poor rural immigrants to turn their own labour into capital. A recent study of their achievements from an entirely different point of view by Hernando de Soto, reveals remarkable facts on the unofficial economy which is the only thing that keeps the Latin American poor alive.[3]

When Turner moved north to the United States he found that the ideas he had formulated in Peru were also true of the richest nation in the world, and when he returned to the dismal housing situation in Britain he learned that the basic and anarchist law of housing he learned from experience was just as valid here. I quote it endlessly in every context because he has phrased it very carefully and specifically. Turner's law of housing is not about ownership, but about control:

"When dwellers control the major decisions and are free to make their own contribution to the design, construction or management of their housing, both the process and the environment produced stimulate individual and social well-being. When people have no control over, nor responsibility for key decisions in the housing process, on the other hand, dwelling environments may instead become a barrier to personal fulfilment and a burden on the economy."[4]

The second sentence explains the expensive failure of post-war housing policy in Britain, while the first explains our few successes, whether in those few good-news stories of tenant management of municipal estates, housing co-ops as in Liverpool, or self-builders on the fringe of the official housing economy. A new and careful study of 750 or so housing co-ops in Britain finds a higher degree of dweller satisfaction than in any form of rented housing.[5]

Recent television features on the work of the Walter Segal Self-Build Trust have shown how the approach devised by the late Walter Segal (who, incidentally, was reared in an anarchist commune in Ticino) have shown that it *is* possible for poor and disadvantaged people to house themselves and change their futures. But they have to overcome immense obstacles with the bureaucracy of housing finance, building and planning, and desperately need technical aid. Another veteran anarchist architect, and frequent contributor to these pages, Brian Richardson, has written an excellent book demystifying the process.[6]

The recent award to Giancarlo De Carlo is a recognition of a minority current in the architectural world, exemplified by, for example, the work of the late Hassan Fathy in Egypt or that of Charles Correa in India, which is far away, from both the 'left-wing' approach to mass housing for the masses, or the present vogue for architecture as the physical embodiment of the entrepreneurial society. A recent collection of his writing over many years includes, near the beginning, his article on the housing problem published in *Volontà* and in *Freedom* in 1948, as well as contribution forty years later to *Volontà* and to the *Rivista Anarchica* in 1989.[7] There is also a lavishly illustrated English book on his work in the intervening decades, which your local library will borrow if you give it enough time.[8]

To me, the significance of this alternative tradition in architecture and housing, which includes innumerable people whose contribution never makes headlines, in bodies like the Association of Community Technical Aid Centres, is that anarchist approaches have been proved to work, not in some imagined society of the future, but in the grim realities of the here and now.

The British housing situation today is far worse than any of the anarchist veterans could have imagined forty years ago. Government housing policy is motivated not by obvious needs but by its determination to kill off local authorities. So it has forced on housing associations, the minority 'unofficial' sector, the role of providing what is now known as 'social' housing, and is pushing them into the same arbitrary policies that brought disaster and discredit to council housing.

Down below are the tenants, subjected to endless rent rises, with the excuse that if they can't pay they should join the queue of supplicants for housing benefit. It is up to us propagandists to point out to fellow citizens that there is another tradition, with its own successes, that can point the way to anarchist alternatives.

Colin Ward

Footnotes

1. Colin Ward, *Tenants Take Over* (Architectural Press, 1974, 1976).

2. Peter Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow*, (Basil Blackwell, 1988).

3. Hernando de Soto, *The Other Path: the invisible revolution in the third world* (I.B. Tauris, 1989).

4. John Turner and Robert Fichter, *Freedom to Build* (Collier-Macmillan, 1972), and John Turner, *Housing by People* (Marion Boyars, 1976).

5. David Clapham and Keith Kintrea, *Housing Co-operatives in Britain: achievements and prospects* (Longman, 1992).

6. Brian Richardson and Jon Broome, *The Self-Build Book* (Green Books, 1991).

7. Giancarlo De Carlo, *Gli Spiriti Dell'Architettura* (Editori Riuniti, 1992).

8. Bernard Zuchi, *Giancarlo De Carlo* (Butterworth Heinemann, 1992).

Food for Thought ... and Action

***Class War** no. 59.* In this issue – a four-page special on crime in the neighbourhood; the Timex struggle; the British state and the IRA; a statement dissociating *Class War* from the actions of its former national organiser, Tim Scargill; and more. 16 pages, 40p (some copies of *no. 58* still available, with a favourable piece on Malcolm X, and a highly unfavourable one on Paddy Ashdown MP).

***Fifth Estate** Spring 1993.* Probably the last issue we shall be getting (on a regular basis) as our former distributors have stopped handling it. Ironically this one is full of excellent articles, e.g. 'Was it anarchy in Somalia?'; the Detroit police beating of Malice Green, the 'Rodney King' who was not videoed – and who did not survive; love, anarchy and Emma Goldman; third world toxic dumping grounds; and lots more. 32 pages, £1.50.

***Jewish Socialist** no. 29* contains articles on football and fascism; the 50th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising; women in Israeli prisons; and several pages of reviews of books and films treating neo-nazis, anti-fascist fighters past and present, and the murder of Iraqi Jews by Ben-Gurion's *Haganah* and *Mossad* at the birth of the Israeli state. 32 pages, £1.50.

***Lobster** no. 24.* A specialist magazine which investigates the secret state, the intelligence services and the far-Right. This issue contains a re-affirmation of the charges that the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight* is being used as a 'listening post' by the security service MI5 against the Left, and some of the original evidence is reprinted here. Also in this issue is Part II of the independent anti-fascist researcher Larry O'Hara's survey of British fascism 1974-92 (Part I is in *Lobster* no. 23, which we still have in stock at the same price); plus the problems which a US investigator of the far-Right has had with the authoritarian Left for being 'politically incorrect'. 30 pages, £2.00.

***Green Anarchist** Summer '93.* The new, *Freedom*-style format *Green Anarchist* is also down in price. Contents of this special 'Land Issue' include Twyford Down and the growing campaign against the perpetrators, Tarmac; land as the source of all wealth; a strategy for a sustainable planet; self-sufficiency from wild food and allotments; plus how to build a police radio jammer (though the instructions are so difficult to follow that you'd probably need a degree in electronics); plus anti-fascism, letters and reviews. 16 pages, 60p.

Asylum: the magazine for democratic psychiatry, Spring '93. The latest issue of this well-respected journal has pieces on Community Treatment Orders; the pathology of identity; a user's report on psychiatric services; letters, reviews and more. The previous issue is still available. Both about 40 pages, £1.00.

Living Earth / The Food Magazine Spring '93. The journals of the Soil Association and the Food Commission here together for an experimental joint issue, hoping that a combination of forces will boost them both. Excellent design and production, and a good cross-section of articles on GATT, BSE, abattoirs, French farmers' sabotage, the organic junk food controversy, baby foods, crisps and snacks, and beers that make you *more* thirsty. A bit pricey, but good value. 40 pages, £3.50.

KM

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Cleaning up the shit!

(continued from page 8)

full acknowledgement of 'Britishness' for Unionists; and protection against religious discrimination. The report says also that no political progress is possible without the participation of Sinn Fein.

In other words, Professor Opsahl and his colleagues are suggesting that peace can be brought about by changing nothing. Legalise nationalism; uphold the right of Catholic and Protestant leaders to indoctrinate their children in separate schools, with the obvious consequences. Let's have more of the same, and then peace will be upon us! It would appear that the culpability of the religious leaders has been whitewashed away by Opsahl and company, just as the religious hierarchies in Yugoslavia have escaped criticism in over twelve months of barbarism.

The evidence from conflicts all over the world is that where different religious groups live together in towns in supposed harmony, that harmony is little more than skin deep. Even in Bosnia where apparently Serbs, Croats and Muslims were obliged, under Tito, for forty years to attend the same schools, 'cultures' have clashed with terrible consequences.

The Opsahl Report on Northern Ireland is about as useful as the Vance-Owen Plan for former Yugoslavia. Any peace plan that is anything to do with officialdom and the powers-that-be is doomed to failure. Let a professional preacher on to your committees, whatever the injustice you are protesting against, and your cause is as good as lost. And that goes for politicians too. There can be no peace without freedom – and freedom is not on their agenda.

EFC

Anarchism and a theory of human behaviour

Towards the end of the nineteenth century anarchism had largely reached a form that would be recognisable to many of its modern supporters. In an extremely interesting article in *The Raven*, George Crowder[1] shows that many nineteenth century anarchists had behind their beliefs an assumption about the correctness of ethical naturalism. Ethical naturalism is the belief that moral judgements state factual claims about the natural world. In other words, ethics could be treated as a science with laws like the physical sciences. By the late twentieth century this is seen to be a largely discredited theory. However, its absence presents problems for understanding a modern libertarian theory of human behaviour. This short article is intended to be part of a wider discussion to develop a modern libertarian theory of human behaviour.

The nineteenth century anarchist who wrote the most about human behaviour and who I feel provides a good starting point is Kropotkin. Whilst not accepting the ethical naturalist stance that can be read from his writings, I feel that Kropotkin was correct to point out the mutual aid / co-operative aspect of human society as he did in his books such as *Mutual Aid*[2] and his unfinished work *Ethics*[3]. Indeed it could be strongly argued that human society would not survive at all unless there were elements of co-operation present. Much of Kropotkin's biological observations may appear hopelessly outdated, but the core element of the presence of co- operation does, I feel, still seem to stand up.

The problem is if human beings are so co-operative why do some groups/individuals gain power over others? Why do nation states exist with wars and all the other problems? Kropotkin never really gave a very satisfactory answer to this problem. At times he believed it was just the superstition of the masses that allowed the many to be dominated by the few. I do not find this to be a very good explanation and wish to pursue lines of thought that lead away from just mere 'superstition of the masses'.

I feel it must be recognised that Kropotkin in his writings about events in history that he felt supported his theories (such as the medieval guilds, the French Revolution and Paris Commune) gave a very one-sided account of the events. It is true that they gave much inspiration to other anarchists, but his writings often failed to notice the much less pleasant behaviour present. For example, during the French Revolution Kropotkin praises the libertarian populism of the *sans-culottes*, but seems not to notice that many of the same people were capable of acting or approving of actions of horrific brutality. Other cases from different periods of history could also be found.

Clearly human beings also possess a capacity for aggression that can at the same time exist with a capacity for co-operation. This must be taken into consideration. Human beings (and perhaps some other primates) have the capacity for language/ communication. They also have the ability to develop abstract thought due to the development of their brain. Unlike other animals, humans are aware of their existence situated in time and place. Every healthy adult knows that they will have a finite existence in a physical form. There was a time before their physical existence, and a time after their physical existence will occur. This, I feel, may well make people develop religion/ philosophy to explain the 'meaning of life'. As the writer Roel van Duyn[4] points out, this almost universal fear of 'finding oneself in the dark' helps create a need to find some sort of certainty. This is present in practically everybody, even people who consider themselves anarchists. This sort of thought process can lead to a need for some sort of fixed authority. From that it is a short step to creating a hierarchy with laws that will protect us. If that is combined with aggression, which itself can provide a useful biological function for the individual, clearly there is a powerful force that can act counter to a purely co-operative humanity.

The psychologist Erich Fromm[5] in some of his writings has shown how social situations can encourage particular character traits in certain groups of individuals. Humans often are at the same time both fascinated and repelled by power.

My feeling is that there is present in individuals both an authoritarian and a libertarian side of the personality. Both are present in varying degrees, as they are present in social organisations. This dualism is part of the human situation.

From this brief discussion I feel that modern anarchists are correct to abandon ethical naturalism. It would also support the need to abandon faith in one revolution to put everything right. On an optimistic note, I feel many anarchists are developing their ideas in a constructive way.

D. Dane

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1. 'Freedom and Order' article by George Crowder in *The Raven* number 20.

2. *Mutual Aid* by P. Kropotkin, Freedom Press, 1987.

3. *Ethics* by P. Kropotkin, Prism Press, no date.

4. *Message of a Wise Kabouter* by Roel van Duyn, Gerald Duckworth & Co, 197?.

5. *Escape from Freedom* by Erich Fromm, Avon Books, 1969.

— BOOK REVIEW —

Ex-squaddies and 'squadism'

The 43 Group
by Morris Beckman
Centerprise Publications, London, 1992, ISBN 0 903738 75 9

This short and immensely readable book tells the story of a Jewish anti-fascist group that was set up immediately after the Second World War and which operated largely in East London. The author was one of the 43 people who founded the group in response to fascist intimidation on public platforms and in the form of street gangs.

Many Jewish people felt that they had fought in the British army against fascism. Yet when they came home they were threatened and abused by fascists on their own doorstep and nobody in authority was prepared to prevent this:

"Jewish ex-servicemen encountering this [the open sale of anti-semitic literature in Jewish neighbourhoods] felt such a bitter sense of betrayal that they sought out their MPs and the first questions condemning the reappearance of fascism were asked in Parliament. Nothing was done; free speech was hallowed. If one of the 'Sons of St George' stood on a chair in Hackney and shouted 'The nazis were right to have gassed the Jews!' it would have been terribly provocative and inexcusably vile, but he had the right to say it. If a Jew in hearing protested he could be arrested for causing a breach of the peace. Such was the law which the Labour government and which the Home Secretary, Chuder Ede, never changed." (page 15)

Neither did the Jewish ex-servicemen get much joy from the Jewish Board of Deputies. In an atmosphere in which they were desperate and angry because no one was going to help them, Jewish ex-servicemen decided that they had to help themselves:

"Alec Black, an infantry officer who had landed on D-Day and survived the heavy fighting at La Falaise an Caen onwards, took the floor. He spoke quietly and lucidly, pointing out that the Jews had always been an integrated and law-abiding community, and that therefore the Jewish establishment could not condone any activity that might break the law.

'In short', said Alec soberly, 'the [Jewish] Defence Committee can only defend; it has to sat within the law and therefore cannot even condone attacking fascists if it means breaking the law. So it is up to us to do what they [the JDC] cannot'.

Then the provisional committee put forward the two aims pencilled in earlier:

– to go on the attack against the emergent fascists with a view to destroying them;

–to lobby Parliament to illegalise racial incitement and make it an offence punishable by imprisonment." (pages 25-26)

The latter aim was never achieved, and the author remained puzzled as to the Labour Government's attitude to the growing fascist menace of the mid to late 1940s:

"Still the most valuable passive ally to Mosley was the seeming complacency of the Labour government. The manner in which Chuder Ede stonewalled questions about fascist activity and fobbed off protests and deputations, indicated that the government had no intention of making incitement to racial hatred illegal. The laws governing free speech and the Public Order Act would remain and protect the Mosleyites." (page 41)

Although they were more or less shunned and condemned by more official Jewish bodies, the 43 Group quickly attracted a large number of people willing to join in with them in militant action against the fascists. Most of those joining were Jewish ex-servicemen. The 43 Group's tactics consisted basically of attempting to stop fascist meetings going ahead. They would turn up at such meetings in small squads. They would begin by heckling, but at a given signal would attempt to break through the ring of fascist stewards and physically turn the platform over. If the small groups attacked the platform in waves, they found it relatively easy to get to the platform, and then it only took one person to tip the platform over. When this happened, the police would intervene and stop the meeting. If the small groups could not turn the platform over, they might start fights with fascist stewards; on these occasions too the police would abort the meeting.

Clearly these militant squads of 'commandos' risked both arrest and serious injury, and they sustained both. But they were never short of new recruits, and the original 43 soon became hundreds. There were sometimes tens of fascist meetings a week, and the group managed to disrupt most of them. The group were thanked and welcomed by many communities for their activities against the fascists; the latter deliberately chose to hold many of their meetings in Jewish areas.

The success of the 43 Group is not explicable solely in terms of their bravery and physical commitment to defeating fascism, however. They were also quite brilliant at infiltrating the various fascist groups with 'Aryan-looking' Jews and non-Jewish members. These spies were able to give the group details of the effect of 43 Group action on fascist morale; and in practical terms, they enabled the 43 Group to get into fascist warehouses and destroy anti-semitic literature, to get tickets to secret meetings and so on.

By the end of the 1940s, fascism in Britain had peaked and was on the decline. Although the numbers of fascists had decreased, their attacks on Jews – both verbal and physical – became more vicious. However, by 1950 they had sunk to such a low point that the 43 Group, which only came into existence to counter them, decided to disband. Due to the value the group placed on intelligence and security, few records and documents were kept. Hence for me, as perhaps for many people even within the anti-fascist movement, this book was the first that has been heard of the 43 Group.

Genuine anti-fascist movements like this only spring up when there is a significant fascist threat, when there is a need for 'pro-active' self-defence, and I was very surprised to hear of how great a threat fascism was immediately after the war. During the war, Mosley and many of his leading supporters were interned under the 18b War Regulations. When the war ended, they were no longer able to strut about in proper uniforms, and calling themselves 'fascists' was inadvisable. Nevertheless, Mosley and his supporters continued where they had left off before internment. Indeed, the fascist movement, represented by a number of small parties, seemed to gather followers at an alarming rate:

"In December 1946, the NEC studies a detailed report prepared by intelligence. It showed that ... the fascists were still drawing in recruits in considerable numbers. They were talking now of organising rallies of up to 5,000 who would march behind a paramilitary band replete with Union Jacks and lightning-flash flags. They would march through Jewish areas first, and then into other territories." (page 53)

The number of people who came to hear Mosley and other fascists speak is truly horrifying:

"By midday, people were pouring into the meeting site and by 1.00pm estimates put the crowd waiting to hear Mosley speak at 5,000." (page 133)

"The [fascist] union band headed the actual procession, then came the bearers of the Union Jacks and fascist flags, followed by an estimated 8,000 marchers." (page 137)

"Yet in London the [fascist] union still had an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 members and supporters." (page 141)

These really are staggering figures for a fascist organisation in Britain. To put it in perspective, the biggest left-wing group in Britain today, the Socialist Workers Party, probably has more than 8,000 members nationally, Class War's members figure in the hundreds (or less), and few national demos get much more than 5,000 people. A few months ago now, anti-fascists were horrified when about 600 fascist street-fighters confronted a march in London; the number of fascists was considered extremely large. Even if some of the events and crowd sizes in Morris Beckman's book are exaggerations, and even if many of the members of the crowds were opponents of the fascists, the events recounted in this book still indicate a bigger fascist menace in the 1940s than we have at present – in this country at least.

This point brings us to question the relevance of the experiences of the 43 Group for people today. There is an important strand of continuity between the fascism of the late 1940s and present-day fascism. The name Martin Webster appears more than once in this text; readers might remember him as, with John Tyndall, one of the leaders of the National Front in the 1970s. I also noticed the name of Harold Jones. He is mentioned firstly as a local fascist from Brighton who attempted to speak during a rally in that town which the 43 Group wrecked, and later as a fascist candidate in London. Harold Jones is, I believe, the father-in-law of the leaders of

(continued on page 7)

Ex-squaddies and 'squadism'

(continued from page 6)

the biggest fascist group in Britain today: John Tyndall (again) of the British National Party. Tyndall still lives in Hove. Indeed, the Brighton/Hove/Worthing area has historically been a target as well as the home for many, many fascist groups and leading individuals. Readers will be pleased to hear, however, that there is nowadays little evidence of fascism in Brighton.

Clearly, the most striking contemporary parallel to the 43 Group in terms of tactics is Anti-Fascist Action. The AFA is accused by critics of 'squadism'. Thus the objection by the SWP, and by extension the Anti-Nazi League, to the tactics of Red Action and the others (such as Class War and the Direct Action Movement) who are the backbone of AFA in many areas, is that such 'squadist' groups fail to engage mass support for anti-fascism and instead substitute their own militancy for the working class as a whole. There are strong resonances here with Marx's complaint against Bakunin that the latter was substituting the most militant proles for the proletariat as a whole, and thus 'imposing' the most revolutionary actions on everyone else (Debord refers to "the dictatorship of the most revolutionary" or something similar).

Members of AFA might point out that AFA groups evolved to deal with a genuine problem experienced by many members of the working class. Of course, fascism in Britain is not the popular force it was fifty years ago; but the small number of fascists that do exist are implicated in a large amount of racist attacks and intimidation. This is a lot worse in some areas than others. In some towns fascism may be virtually non-existent; but in other places, including some of the London boroughs, fascism and racism are entrenched and growing. For example, the number of racist attacks in the Welling area has massively increased since the British National Party set up their bookshop/headquarters in the town. The role of the open existence of such premises, of course, is to legitimise racism.

Moreover, the recent tactics of the Anti-Nazi League have hardly inspired most anti-fascists, nor created an effective mass movement in the working class. The ANL seeks to engage in activities against fascism that receive maximum publicity (e.g. petitions, co-opting the famous), but are often oblivious to the possibility that by drawing attention to fascists in this way they may be helping them to get recruits. Fascism declines when people no longer perceive it as an option; lots of young lads are drawn to it because they perceive the prototypical figures as hard men – to see those hard men humiliated and driven off the streets dispels this illusion; it renders fascism unviable, a political freak with no future.

As well as reflecting debates within the contemporary anti-fascist movement(s), this book also raises an issue that has concerned more than one *Freedom* contributor in the last few months: that of free speech. I have argued before that the knee-jerk call for 'free speech' in effect may be operating as a legitimisation of racial intimidation; words are not neutral but can function as threats and promises – discourse *achieves* as well as described. It is no coincidence that it is the extreme right that usually makes the most fuss over free speech.

> "There was a surprising debate held at the University College; Raven Thompson [a leading Mosleyite] was the chief speaker on the subject 'Upholding freedom of speech for Oswald Mosley'." (page 119)

I shouldn't need to remind readers that there is an important distinction to be made between the censoring activity of the state (which, as a 'representative body' purports to act on 'our' behalf) and the autonomous activity of working class people acting as a mass to close down a fascist meeting. I suppose the point behind this has something in common with George Walford's recent arguments about one person's freedoms implying less freedom for someone else (see Letters Page over the last few months). Of course, we say as a rule of thumb that everyone should be able to say what they want, but in practice nobody believes in absolute freedom of speech. We don't, for example, uphold the absolute right of a person in a crowded theatre to shout 'Fire!' causing panic and mayhem. Freedom of speech needs to be seen in relative terms; this was the conclusion the 43 Group came to – the price of the freedom of the Jewish community to live in peace was the curtailment of some of the fascists' freedoms. Defeating them in some kind of ideal rational debate was not a realistic option – even if the fascists are willing to debate, to engage with them in this way functions to legitimise racism as a political viewpoint.

The important point about this attempt to curtail the activities of the fascists was that, in doing so, the 43 Group were recognising that they had to go beyond the law: they had certain needs, but instead of enabling them to meet those needs, the law simply stood in the way. However, it is arguably an important limitation of the approach of the 43 Group that they did not have a political perspective – such as anarchism, socialism or communism – within which to situate their militant anti-fascism. They were explicitly non-political:

> "It is agreed that we set up an organisation to fight the fascists. This organisation will be apolitical – anyone who wants to fight fascism and anti-semitism, regardless of their political views, will be welcome." (page 25)

The very rationale for the existence of the 43 Group was that the Second World War had been against Nazism; most people were united, irrespective of their differences, against the fascist threat. Yet we may question this understanding of the war. Was it rather a war against the German state? The ideology of the Nazis was not itself sufficient for the British state to declare war: Churchill was often politically quite close to a fascist viewpoint himself, the British state were not ready to take in European Jewish victims of Nazi persecution, and the Nazi state in Germany persisted for six years before the British politicians decided it represented a threat to British capital.

Perhaps with a more politically informed and critical perspective, the 43 Group would not have harboured delusions about the potential of the state to protect them against Mosley's threats. But we have to ask ourselves this: would ideologically-committed anarchists have done any better than the 43 Group? Would they have evolved better tactics, better intelligence and so on? Personally I doubt it. Anarchy will not be achieved by pre-committed ideological anarchists acting upon that ideology. Rather, what happens is that ordinary people, most of whom may have no left-wing ideological commitments at first, act to fulfil some need. Once they have met this need, they are in a different social landscape, and hence new needs and tastes can develop. In other words, change occurs through a bootstrapping process – though of course it can be knocked back at any stage. Although the 43 Group disbanded instead of generalising its effective tactics to other areas of working class need, there is some evidence in this book for the change in ideas that comes from collective actions to meet needs; the author speaks at more than one point of the disappointment felt by some in the group at the behaviour of the police. Certain experiences during activities like this enable people to recognise the police not as the 'meat in the sandwich', a neutral agency, but as an agent of the state, itself a force bound up with capitalism. In meeting their needs, in other words, people will ultimately find themselves in conflict with the state. To meet their needs, they ultimately need to abolish the state and capitalism.

The 43 Group by Morris Beckman is not a heavy political tract full of theory; it is an exciting, engaging tale of everyday struggles, full of first-hand accounts and fascinating personal details. I recommend you read it.

Johnny Yen

The Rising of the Masses

John Pilgrim writes of the development of anarchist elements in our society "which gives us a little, if distant, hope". Mao Tze-tung declared that "freedom cannot be achieved for five hundred years, perhaps a thousand years!" Are there now anarchists who parallel the Maoist 'delay' of freedom? 'Theory' may reflect the practical realities of the moment, but it can also restrain and reduce all expectations. 'Theory' itself can uproot the possibilities for freedom. Mere cynicism is not liberatory. Whatever happened to 'Imagination to Power!' and 'Be realistic, demand the impossible!'?

I continue to value Colin Ward's *Anarchy* magazine from the 1960s. It opened a new world for me, with exploration of the multiple social phenomena of the day, wide-ranging and unfettered. But should we not persist in exploring the phenomena of today? Is it sufficient to impose 'theory' from the 1960s on the 1990s, whether or not the phenomena are identical?

The original Marxism projected on the world by the Second International was defined by the Kautsky-Bernstein disagreements, revolutionism versus reformism, reformism versus revolutionism! Anarchists, however, were excluded from the Second International. The Kautsky-Bernstein polarities are irrelevant to anarchist history. Anarchists have always involved themselves with multiple dimensions, e.g. the pursuit of meliorist objectives by revolutionary means, the pursuit of revolutionary objectives by meliorism, any number of other possible variables within a non-governmental cultural matrix. Indeed, at one time it was common for 'purist' Marxists and even Trotskyists in the US to accuse anarchists of advocating 'reformism by blows!' Nevertheless, John Pilgrim states that he does not know any anarchists who are receptive to ideas of revolutionism and mass uprising. "At least the sort of anarchists I know". Well, John, please allow me to introduce myself! Although I do not wish to abandon the possibilities for anarchist meliorism, neither do I wish to abandon the options for revolutionism. Each dimension buttresses the other.

Paul Avrich, in *Anarchist Portraits*, describes the Paris Commune of 1871 in terms of a sequence of cantonalist rebellions, a series of interrelated phenomena stretching to the present day. This analysis is unique and thought-provoking. Avrich examines the Commune from an analytical perspective not shared with other historians. Phenomena, and not mere leftism and mere politics, become the source of analysis.

John Pilgrim writes that the "levée en masse" is a "fantasy" and that it is "unlikely in itself"! But is it possible to ignore phenomena simply because they do not conform to the 'theory' of the moment? Am I asked to ignore the mass uprising in Kwangju, Korea, in 1980, the 'levée en masse' in Manila, the Philippines in 1986 (which I personally experienced) or Beijing in 1989, etc? And there have been two significant mass uprisings during 1992, in Bangkok and Los Angeles. (Indeed, there have been three uprisings in Los Angeles within my lifetime: the 'zoot suits', the 'Watts' and 1992.) All of these rebellions displayed an evident passion for freedom by 'masses' of people. Nevertheless, the left has continuously ignored these events. Should we attach ourselves to the fate of the left?

Arrest records indicate that far more Hispanics than blacks were charged with 'looting' etc. in Los Angeles following the revolt of 1992. Strangely *Freedom* did not even mention Hispanics in its own reportage of the uprising. Yet the anarchist ideas of Flores Magón and Zapata are pervasive and continuing among the Hispanic communities of the US. Flores Magón, who died under unacceptable circumstances in Leavenworth Prison, is as much a part of radical history in the US as in Mexico. Specific Magónista elements were active in this revolt in Los Angeles. Since the 1960s I have known Magónistas who have been involved with organising the boycotts and other activities of the farmworkers, and committees against the Vietnam War, committees for multi-cultural diversity, etc. I was a member of a committee during the 1970s that worked to introduce Spanish-language radicals in the US to Spanish-speaking anarchist publications from other countries. I believe there are more Spanish-speaking than English-speaking anarchists in the US.

'Mo', writing in the same issue, describes Marx's "immiseration of the proletariat" as "myth". Indeed, this point of view was fresh and stimulating in the 1960s. Today, however, it is a cliché, not altogether supported by facts. I suggest that 'Mo' visit Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, etc., or Los Angeles, where the growing 'immiseration' of the industrial workforce has been clearly observable since 1981. 'Post-scarcity' theories are a bit threadbare today! Also, beginning with the 1974-75 recession, there has been a continuing and measurable decline in the rate of profit. Ironically, and perhaps for the first time since the original publication of Marx's *Capital*, one of Marx's key arguments is demonstrable as a phenomenon, just as the whole world has announced the 'death of Marxism'!

John Pilgrim writes that a "levée en masse" is "unlikely in itself and even more unlikely to result in the sort of society anarchists want to see". Oh, the poor young insurgents of Los Angeles! John Pilgrim, before the fact and after the fact, damns them to futility and authoritarianism. Self-definition and self-development through rebellion are not to be allowed. Participation, spontaneity and self-exploration in a process of liberation are not to be allowed. Simply extract your own 'brains', your own creativity, and replace them with the pre-fabricated plans of an élite.

Throughout the 20th century the Leninists have seen themselves as 'the subject, the active, of revolution'. They have repeatedly substituted themselves in place of 'the masses'. Oftentimes this substitution has taken the form of a militarisation of structures. Some anarchists periodically blame 'the masses' for the continuation of statism and capitalism. I do not blame 'the masses'. I blame the left, including anarchist élites. After a century of betrayals and obfuscation, 'the masses' are quite right to be hesitant and suspicious of leftist élites.

John Pilgrim writes that "we look to the libertarian and anarchist elements in our society and seek to develop them". Well, I do not think that the DeLeonists and other 'purist' marxists are vanguardist by ideology, but they become vanguardist through their behaviour. They sit and wait for 'the masses' to come to them. Come to the Party, the Party with all the plans and ideas! Creativity by 'the masses' is neither expected nor wanted. Are there now anarchists who see themselves alone as 'the subject' of liberation? Indeed, I have encountered people who insist that all anarchists are merely the reverse side of the same coin as the Bolsheviks, an anti-statist élite, but still an élite, decentralist structuralists, but structuralists nevertheless! Perhaps all vanguardism and élitism are called into question by the breakdown of Russian 'communism'. And yet, are there anarchists who wilfully strive to be an élite, a kind of post-modernist Bolshevism reflected out of a mirror?

Deconstructionist and situationist perspectives have become quite fashionable at the moment. However, I would be more persuaded by their arguments if they did not always seem to degenerate into mere 'opinions'. They are as ahistorical as the organisations of the 'purist' marxists. Nothing ever happens! Where are the facts of resistance? Where are the statements of rebellious persons? Where are the descriptions of resistant and rebellious 'situations'? Instead, the post-modernists have become a kind of thought-police riding on the anarchist movement, endlessly quibbling about words. They oppose the use of words like 'society' or 'class'. They deny the possibility of revolution. I am reminded of Makhno's criticism of people for whom anarchism was nothing but 'words'!

The liberals and other 'pragmatists', who reject all method and philosophy, respond to social phenomena with shock and amazement, or avoidance. They meet each fact of life as an 'unforeseen' phenomenon. To them, uprisings by 'the masses' are merely 'unexpected' or 'unlikely'. In contrast, I believe that phenomena are concrete and specific, and that human community is its own end!

Séamas Cain

Authority and the future of anarchism

Dear Comrades,

We are sad to hear about the attack against Freedom Press. You have our full solidarity.

Now it is high time to analyse the roots of the old and new fascism, it is high time to be critical and self-critical!

Self-critical, for example, regarding the very bad discussion about feminism and such articles in *Freedom* as from Larry Gambone (*Freedom*, 29th May 1993). Because one thing is clear, the basis of fascism is racism and sexism. Coming back to the article from Larry Gambone named 'Authority and the future of anarchism'. His article is full of dangerous traps and faults. The League Lombardy is a party with very strong leadership, with racist theories against all strangers and also against the poor inhabitants from the south of Italy. In Switzerland too we have a party like the League, it is a copy of the Italian one and called League Ticinesi. The Swiss league works together with one of the greatest fascist groups (National Action) in Switzerland. Both leagues have also fascist tendency. So it is no surprise for us that these groups are discussing Proudhon. Proudhon is the brown spot in the theory of anarchism, he is not only the so-called father of anarchism but also the 'harbinger of fascism' as it describes the historian Salwyn Schapiro in the *American Historical Review*. Read please the diary of Proudhon, or *La Pornocratie ...*; *France et Rhin*; *De la Justice dans la Révolution et dans l'Eglise*; and read his correspondence with his wife, etc., etc. In all these writings you will find expressions against Jews, strangers and women; you will find texts from him full of hate and fear against all people who come from outside into the small world of the community of his federalist ideas. Read please the publication from the Société de Proudhon, this is about the influence of the group called Cercle Proudhon of French fascism (G. Nevet, *Le Cercle Proudhon*). We have not enough space here for all quotations or to prove it, you might read it yourself. Proudhon is a reactionary and for an anarchism revival, a very dangerous person; he has done more for fascism than anarchism. You can find some very good ideas in Proudhon's work, but you must see and use his theories in his total context. At his end he was a racist chauvinist, as his former friend Herzen called him (see the text about Proudhon in Herzen's book *Memoir*). We must use Proudhon very carefully, we think it would be better for some *Freedom* writers going back to the roots like Godwin, Emma Goldman and Malatesta than to Proudhon. Proudhon is also an important source for the so-called right anarchism (in France groups or radical rightists are calling themselves anarchists of right). Malatesta and the others are more symbols of fighting against fascism and for a left anarchism.

To the discussion about women's page: it seems that not any woman reads *Freedom*, we couldn't find letters in *Freedom* from women to this discussion – or did you do the same with letters from women as with the article from Mary Quintana? Only because you don't agree with her demand that *Freedom* should have a women's page, you didn't print her text in *Raven 21*? If this is so, we call this censorship! This discussion is the proof too that a women's page is necessary, even in *Freedom*. And we have to refer again to Proudhon's sexist book *La Pornocratie ...*

Werner Portmann, Silvia Zweidler and others
Zurich, Switzerland

[We did print the article 'For a Women's Page in *Freedom*' by Mary Quintana in *The Raven* number 21, along with many other articles on Feminism, Anarchism and Women, 96 pages, £3 post-free anywhere – Editors]

Anarchist Summer School 1993

The Anarchist Summer School was an overwhelming success. I can say this without fear of contradiction. All remarks about it were praiseworthy. Several comrades said, in essence, that the 'School' surpassed anything they had attended as far as they could ever remember; whether it was a conference or a 'School'.

At the close of the 'School' an appeal was made to all groups with an anarchist orientation to have greater cohesion between themselves through the medium of their respective secretaries. My personal aspiration is to experience a new 'Anarchist Federation of Britain' being promoted and culminating in 1994, and essentially respecting local autonomy of the respective groups.

The group which promoted the recent 'Summer School' was most encouraging. Those who exercised an active part did what they could. No one can do more. What one cannot do, can do something else. Collectively the group were exemplary.

I hope I may be excused for saying that in my view the younger element in the group by their enthused efforts were inspirational to me. This is not to neglect any salutation to the elder team who may have been instrumental in enthusing the younger comrades in their diversity.

Robert Lynn

Please keep sending in your letters and donations

News from Angel Alley

Don't be surprised if you receive *Freedom* a week late, ditto your orders. We have virtually been banned from our own premises, not by the 'terrorists' but by the fire authorities on the grounds that the building was a fire risk. What surprised us was that it had been so declared in 1954 yet had been occupied by two firms before we, and Aldgate Press, took up residence! How the bureaucratic mind works. When we are the victims of the arsonists the establishment comes in to clobber us a second time! Perhaps by the time this issue of *Freedom* reaches you the ban may have been lifted.

We go on advertising the three new Freedom Press titles though, because of all the problems at 84b, only the Brian Martin volume is actually available. But the other two were only delayed at the printing stage. Hopefully copies will be available before the end of the month.

We are hoping that the extensive damage to the printing machines will be covered by the insurance. However, more protection to the premises is being carried out at considerable expense to Freedom Press. What a waste when all we are trying to do is to *communicate* in order to help people make something of their lives! All people, including these surely *mindless* arsonists, cannot reject the arguments of anarchism for a fuller, more rewarding life. The anarchists are deeply involved with the unemployed and the underprivileged. The ethnic minorities are today the underprivileged who, fortunately for everybody else, do the 'dirty work'. In previous generations the scapegoats who did the dirty work were the Italians.

As readers will appreciate, the office is not operating normally, so forgive us those of you who have sent donations if we haven't sent a *personal* acknowledgement as we would do normally. But we are grateful to all who have sent messages and donations in these troubled times in Angel Alley. We hope that the fact that *Freedom* has not been stopped by the 'terrorists' is our response to your solidarity.

Not only were we unable to dispatch the last issue of Freedom on time, it was not possible to make last minute corrections or to change the size of headlines and fill small spaces.

We must correct one glaring misprint in the main editorial ('Lamont has gone – so what?') at the bottom of column 3, page 2, which reads: "At the same time we import into this country £6,000 million more in produce than we export *through* our non-friends, the supermarkets – *we* maintain that we could produce £4,000 million of that £6,000 million deficit if we wanted to!" Instead of *through* read *though*, and instead of *we maintain* read *who maintain*. Though we agree with them, the misprints make nonsense of the quote.

Up with *some* freedoms

Dear Editors,

Two letters of mine recently printed in *Freedom* (3rd and 31st April) raised the question whether the phrase commonly used by anarchists 'freedom that does not interfere with the freedom of others' is an empty form of words. As far as I can see no such freedom exists or can exist. I asked for help. Could any reader tell me of a freedom of action, worth thinking about, that does not interfere with the freedom of others? Instead of the expected demonstration that there are *lots* of them, nobody has named even one.

Still more surprising, the two letters printed in response both go to confirm my conclusion. One printed on 17th April gave instances only of freedoms that do interfere with the freedom of others, and now (11th June) Piers J. Hale comes forward with further support. Piers quotes some declarations by Bakunin that exercise of the freedoms he sought would mean interfering with those valued by Rousseauites and bourgeois liberals, and goes on to add further examples himself.

My second letter took up the example, given by John Myhill, of the freedom enjoyed by a stockbroker, and Piers condemns such freedom; enjoyed by only a few it limits the freedom of everybody else. A fine confirmation of the point I was making.

Piers goes beyond the usual arguments to describe even the *discussion* of 'individualistic' freedoms as a 'trap'; we should, he says, "avoid being limited by the parameters of individualistic freedom". Although the esoteric polysyllable obscures the meaning this is, again, effectively my point. Piers argues that the expression of 'individualistic' freedoms limits those he values.

I ask again: can anybody name a freedom of action worth thinking about that can be exercised without interfering with the freedom of others? If not, I suggest we need to revise our conception of anarchy. To describe it as a society in which only those freedoms are exercised that do not interfere with the freedom of others is to say (since no such freedoms exist) that it would permit no freedom at all. I suggest we would do better to accept that anarchy would entail a great deal of interference with freedom; a major difference between that condition and our present-one would be the suppression of many freedoms now widely exercised – freedoms to exploit, oppress and degrade among them.

George Walford

Education Workers' Network

Never before has the need for an anarcho-syndicalist union in education been stronger. We are facing a concerted attack by the state in all sectors of education. The press and the official unions present these attacks as being unrelated and thus solidarity is minimal between education workers and students in the various sectors.

Education policy: more of the same

At present the Tory government is, with some success, introducing sweeping changes to an already unequal system that has always favoured the kids of the middle class. These changes are intended to bring about a system that gives low level 'vocational' skills to most kids and a high level academic education to the children of the rich. Above all this type of system will at school level be extremely cheap and at post-school level capable of being privatised, thus allowing the politicians' mates to turn a profit at our expense.

Workers in education can expect things to go from bad to worse. This year we will face yet another pay cut in real terms. For most further and higher education workers new contracts will be introduced, yet again in order to make us work longer hours for no extra pay. There will also be increasing de-skilling with unqualified and untrained staff being invited to scab on existing workers.

The need for true solidarity

We in the Education Workers' network aren't willing to accept the limited responses that have been made against these policies. The 'opposition' parties are being pathetic even by their own standards. They actually all agree on the main thrust of government policy – being only second-rate Tories themselves this is hardly surprising. The unions have been forced by the militant mood of the workforce to take some action with the SAT boycott and the one-day strike held by further education staff. Whilst these small shows of defiance may be a step in the right direction, they do not go anywhere like far enough. We need to unite all education workers and students into an organisation which they truly control themselves and which concentrates on building solidarity both nationally and internationally.

Some early successes

In the Education Workers' Network (EWN) we have already scored some successes. Recently two of our comrades in the EWN at New College, California, were sacked for organising the union. Pressure from within the USA, and internationally, played a major part in changing the management's mind. They reinstated one of our members and have offered the other compensation. If a handful of workers with almost no financial resources can achieve this result just imagine what could be done if we were the size of the 'official' unions.

The immediate future

We intend to keep up the fight on as many fronts as we can manage. We recently launched a regular national bulletin called *The General Assembly* which is going down well (if you would like a copy send an s.a.e. to the address below). If you would like more information about the network or would like to join us, then write to the same address below. We need all the help we can get but are not party builders and will not hassle you to sell papers or become a member of the workers' vanguard. We try to organise ourselves on a truly democratic basis in line with our anarcho-syndicalist principles. Similar networks exist for transport workers and those in the public service, we can pass on any enquiries to them.

National Secretary, EWN,
PO Box 110, Liverpool L69 8DP

Cleaning up the shit on someone else's doorstep?

While not a few people are showing concern about the events in the former Yugoslavia, even to the extent in some cases of going there at some personal risk to demonstrate for peace or take relief supplies of food and medicines, etc., the mess on our own doorstep in Northern Ireland continues to fester unabated. The policy seems to be that if we cannot save ourselves, perhaps we should save some poor souls somewhere else. There is, however, another explanation.

Not only are governments – and in this case the British government – against other countries, even under the auspices of the United Nations, interfering in their internal affairs, they are just as opposed to their own people doing the same.

The British government is therefore quite happy for its subjects, in their human compassion, to go and help the Bosnians provided they keep their noses out of Northern Ireland.

It is okay by our government for the Irish problem to be left to commissions and those professional cartoon characters, the priests, pastors, vicars, cardinals and bishops, because they can keep on talking about peace like the generals and politicians without meaning it. These well-trained professionals are in the pockets of their governments, and can be trusted not to take the word literally. Unfortunately for the human race peace, to these people, means complete submission to whatever religious hierarchy or secular authority sponsors them. Thirty pieces of silver is peanuts to most of them.

Like the word 'love', peace oozes from the lips of professional men of God like 'rhubarb' in thespian crowd scenes. The Pope regularly strangles the word in twenty different languages, and the Reverend Ian Paisley is going to get peace even if he has to shoot every Fenian bastard in the process.

The latest commission on Northern Ireland has just published its report (Lilliput Press) on behalf of Initiative '92, and pretends that the bombings and shootings can be stopped by a Bill of Rights (don't a lot of other people wish they had one!); a programme of training political leaders (!); reform of the RUC; legal recognition of Irish nationalism;

(continued on page 5)

MEETINGS

Anarchist Forum

Fridays at about 8.00pm at the Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square (via Cosmo Street off Southampton Row), London WC1.

1993 SEASON OF MEETINGS

2nd July - 'Anarchism and Creative Unemployment' (speaker Michael Murray)

9th July - Last meeting: planning the 1993/94 programme

The next academic year's term dates have not yet been decided, but one can presume a similarity to other years. If anyone would like to give a talk or lead a discussion, overseas or out-of-town speakers especially, please contact either Dave Dane or Peter Neville at the meetings, or Peter Neville at 4 Copper Beeches, Witham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 4AW (Tel: 081-847 0203), not too early in the day please, giving subject matter and prospective dates and we will do our best to accommodate. We are particularly interested in having more women speakers and those from ethnic minorities. After the meetings we go to a pub where, some say, the real discussions begin. Please note the Mary Ward Centre is available for hire for other meetings Monday to Saturday. Details from Patrick Freestone at the Mary Ward Centre.

PN for London Anarchist Forum

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Red Rambles

A programme of free walks in the White Peak for Greens, Socialists, Libertarians and Anarchists.

Sunday 11th July – Circular walk through Holloway and Dethick. Meet at the Village Green, Holloway, map reference 325 563, at 1pm. Length 3-4 miles.

Sunday 8th August – Ladybower Reservoir and Lost Lad Walk. Bring strong boots, waterproofs, food and drink. Meet at Ladybower Picnic Site, map reference 173 894, at 10.30am. Length 8 miles.

Sunday 5th September – Church Broughton and deserted medieval village. Meet at entrance to Church Broughton Parish Church, 1pm. Church Broughton is 5 miles west of Derby. Length of walk 4 miles.

Telephone for further details: 0773-827513

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- **Strip the Experts** *by Brian Martin*, 70 pages, £1.95
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